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## Day for Jewish-Catholic Dialogue Marked in Italy

### Reflect on Commandment 'Thou Shalt Not Kill'

ROME, JAN. 17, 2012 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- Today in Italy marks the Day for Dialogue Between Catholics and Jews, and the reflection continued with a 10-year program on the Ten Commandments, this year focused on "Thou shalt not kill."

The annual dialogue day was established by the Italian bishops' conference in 1990.

In an interview with Vatican Radio, Rabbi Giuseppe Laras, retired president of the Italian Rabbinic Assembly, explained that the aim of the day "is to simplify and intensify Jewish-Christian dialogue."

"To this end," he said, "Jews and Catholics meet to reflect especially on those themes we can confront together, such as the search for peace and mutual understanding after 2,000 years of misinterpretation and distressing events. Thus, both the Catholic and Jewish worlds await this day with high expectations, because the more dialogue is consolidated the more the risk of anti-Semitism diminishes."

Following their program on the Ten Commandments, the theme for this year led the group to reflect on the command not to kill.

"The command not to kill is vital for men and women, irrespective of their membership of one religion or the other," the rabbi noted. "It is vital to respect and honor human life in all its sacredness and uniqueness. This is an important theme for our own times, in which throughout the world respect for human life is often ignored and violated."

Father Gino Battaglia, director of the National Office for Ecumenism and Interreligious Dialogue, observed that "the rich Jewish tradition, developed through millennia of studying the Law, makes a fundamental contribution. Yet the validity of this Commandment is evident, and not only in the literal sense of murder being a crime. I am thinking, for example, of the battle to abolish the death penalty, the problem of widespread violence ... and of respect for life. In this sense, Jewish-Christian dialogue takes concrete form in its commitment to society and to the world."

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